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By Annie Matrix

There is nothing I like better than sticking it to the 'Man'. On some days I don't mind what 'Man' that is, in fact some times I just want to stick it to all men and some women too, especially the smooth-skinned trollope who serves me anti aging cream in the pharmacy, with a glittering and sickening smile. But how many of us are really unsatisfied with our lives? How many of us can really pluck up the courage to change the status quo? We all cower at the thought of taking a risk and eating our dinner out of a dumpster, using our skin as a pin cushion for hypodermic needles filled with vinegar and smelling like cat urine.

However, Stephane Meer, sick of being a cog in a mass wheel of mediocrity has no such fears. He is a composer who has decided not only to stick it to the man, but has stolen his wife for good measure. Stephane is a talented composer and has been in the business for a while. However, his enormous talent was being forced to fit into the small and unoriginal margins that his employers were dictating to him. Sick of feeling like a deflated accordion, Stephane picked himself up, brushed himself down and made a resolution. No longer was anyone going to tell him what to do anymore. He embarked on his first solo project. He set up Studio Capitale, an audiovisual post production studio that does a range of works for big studios. The profits that he made from his independent studio he poured into his new labour of love; 'Helena and the Orchestra of the World of Mist'. Stephane Meer is an unusually talented and driven individual. He is a lover of wildlife and especially horses. In fact, he is one of the most respected horse whisperers in France. His love for animals and music brought the virtuoso pianist Helene Grimaud to his notice. She has devoted herself to the protection of wolves, setting up a Wolf Conservation Centre outside of New York and spending a lot of time raising and studying them. Helene Grimaud is the inspiration for the main character in Stephane's newest project. The concept of 'Helena and the World of the Orchestra of the World of Mist' is exactly this; Stephane wanted to adapt the audio book for the 21st century, using all the technology available to him. He is a strong believer in the idea of a story being driven not only by its words and pictures, but also by the music that accompanies it. Therefore when you watch the episodes, which are available online for free, you really see that the music he has composed is at the very heart of the story. 'Today, opera is a wonderful musical medium, but it seems to me that the theatrical form is no longer in sync with the 21st century. We are a generation of cinema, television and Internet'. This is the philosophy of Meer and although it may not be music to our ears it is hard to disagree with. The word opera only comes into speech these days when it is teamed with soap or Winfrey (and even then it is spelt wrong.) In the same way that mothers hide cabbage amongst the chips so that children get their dose of vitamins, Stephane is making good music more accessible by surrounding it with fantasy illustrations and an action adventure. 'I like the thought that if Richard Wagner was here today, he would write musical tales on the Internet for everyone, instead of contemporary operas for the few. I'm trying to recreate the same process of blending text and music writing, with a fantasy world where instruments tell a story just as well as words do'. But 'Helena and the Orchestra of the World of Mist' is not only for children, it is for all who believe in and support independent artists who are having a tough time of late. Although, some believe that the internet is really only a tool for 'geeks and pedophiles' Stephane and his team are showing that works of quality are on there too, you just have to know where to look. So have a look at www.musicaltales.com and even if you haven't got the gusto to stick it to the man yourself and go out on a limb then at least support Stephane who has, and therefore by association the 'Man' will know you intend to stick it to him, hard. Annie Matrix annie.matrix@hotmail.co.uk